

Mahaslayatanika Sutta (MN#149) - The Great Sixfold Base

by Bhikkhu Bodhi

(This Sutta is taken from "The Majjhima Nikaya: The Middle Length Sayings by Bhikkhu Bodhi and Bhikkhu Nanamoli. It had to do with ego identification and the releasing of this self identification. It is to be read out-loud and internalized as you go along. Do not read it fast. Read it slowly and consider each part as you go along. Reading it out-loud, in English, as a group is very helpful. Although it takes a long time, it is worth the effort.)

1] "Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Savatthi in Jeta's grove, Anathapindika's Park. There he addressed the bhikkhus thus: ' Bhikkhus.' - 'Venerable Sir,' they replied. The Blessed one said this

2] "Bhikkhus, I shall teach you a discourse on the great six-fold base. Listen and attend closely to what I shall say.' - 'Yes, venerable sir,' the bhikkhus replied. The blessed One said this:

3] "Bhikkhus, *when one does not know and see the eye as it actually is*, when one does not know and see forms as they actually are, when one does not know and see eye-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see eye-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see eye-contact as it actually is, when one does not know and see as it actually is [the eye-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with eye-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the eye, for forms, for eye-consciousness, for eye-contact, for [the eye-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with eye-contact as condition.

"When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, pondering gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built up for oneself in the future; and one's eye-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that - increases. One's bodily and mental troubles increase, one's bodily and mental torments increase, one's bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering [dis-ease].

4] "Bhikkhus, *when one does not know and see the ear as it actually is*, when one does not know and see sounds as they actually are, when one does not know and see ear-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see ear-contact as it actually is when one does not know and see as it actually is [the ear-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with ear-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the ear, for sounds, for ear-consciousness, for ear-contact, for [the ear-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with the ear-contact as condition.

"When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, pondering gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built up for oneself in the future; and one's ear-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that - increases. One's bodily and mental troubles increase, one's bodily and mental torments increase, one's bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering [dis-ease].

5] "Bhikkhus, *when one does not know and see the nose as it actually is*, when one does not know and see odors as they actually are, when one does not know and see nose-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see nose-contact as it actually is, when one does not know and see as it actually is [the nose-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with nose-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the nose, for odors, for nose-consciousness, for nose-contact, for [the nose-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with the nose-contact as condition.

"When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, pondering gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built renewal for oneself in the future; and one's nose-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that - increases. One's bodily and mental troubles increase, one's bodily and mental torments increase, one's bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering [dis-ease].

6] "Bhikkhus, *when one does not know and see the tongue as it actually is*, when one does not know and see flavors as they actually are, when one does not know and see tongue-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see tongue-contact as it actually is, when one does not know and see as it actually is [the tongue-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with tongue-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the tongue, for flavors, for tongue-consciousness, for tongue-contact, for [the tongue-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with tongue-contact as condition.

"When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, pondering gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built up for oneself in the future; and one's tongue-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that - increases. One's bodily and mental troubles increase, one's bodily and mental torments increase, one's bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering [disease].

7] "Bhikkhus, *when one does not know and see the body as it actually is*, when one does not know and see tangibles as they actually are, when one does not know and see body-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see body-contact as it actually is, when one does not know and see as it actually is [the body-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with eye-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the body, for tangibles, for body-consciousness, for body-contact, for [the body-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with body-contact as condition.

"When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, pondering gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built up in the future; and one's body-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that - increases. One's bodily and mental troubles increase, one's bodily and mental torments increase, one's bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering [dis-ease].

8] "Bhikkhus, *when one does not know and see mind as it actually is*, when one does not know and see mind-objects as they actually are, when one does not know and see mind-consciousness as it actually is, when one does not know and see mind-contact as it actually is, when one does not know and see as it actually is [the mind-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with mind-contact as condition, then one is inflamed by lust for the mind, for mind-objects, for mind-consciousness, for mind-contact, for [the mind-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-not-painful that arises with mind-contact as condition.

"When one abides inflamed by lust, fettered, infatuated, pondering gratification, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are built up for oneself in the future; and one's mind-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that - increases. One's bodily and mental troubles increase, one's bodily and mental fevers increase, and one experiences bodily and mental suffering [disease].

9] "Bhikkhus, *when one knows and sees the eye as it actually is*, when one knows and sees forms as they actually are, when one knows and sees eye-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees eye-contact as it actually is, when one knows and sees as it actually is [the eye-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with eye-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust for the eye, for forms, for eye-consciousness, for eye-contact, for [the eye-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with eye-contact as condition.

"When one abides un-inflamed by lust, unfettered, un-infatuated, pondering danger, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and one's eye-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied delight and lust, and delights in this or that - is abandoned. One's bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

10] "The view of a person such as this is right view [harmonious perspective]. His intention is right intention [harmonious imaging], his action is right action [harmonious movement], his speech is right speech [harmonious communication], his livelihood is right livelihood [harmonious life style], his effort is right effort [harmonious practice], his mindfulness is right mindfulness [harmonious observation], his concentration is right concentration [harmonious collectedness]. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfillment in him by development; the four right kinds of striving also comes to fulfillment in him by development; the four bases for spiritual power also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five faculties also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five powers come to fulfillment in him by development; the seven enlightenment factors come to fulfillment in him by development. These two things - collectedness and insight - occur in him yoked evenly together. He fully understands by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

11] "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates affected by clinging, that is, the material form aggregate affected by clinging, feeling affected by clinging, perception affected by clinging, volition affected by clinging, consciousness affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge? Ignorance and craving for being. These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be developed by direct knowledge? Collectedness and insight. These are the things that should be developed by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

12] "Bhikkhus, *when one knows and sees the ear as it actually is*, when one knows sounds as they actually are, when one knows and sees ear-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees ear-contact as it actually is, when one knows and sees as it actually is [the ear-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful with ear-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust of the ear, for sounds, for ear-consciousness, for ear-contact, for [the ear-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with ear-contact as condition.

"When one abides un-inflamed by lust, unfettered, un-infatuated, pondering danger, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and one's ear-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this or that - is abandoned. One bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

13] "The view of a person such as this is right view [harmonious perspective]. His intention is right intention [harmonious imagining], his action is right action [harmonious movement], his speech is right speech [harmonious communication], his livelihood is right livelihood [harmonious life style], his effort is right effort [harmonious practice], his mindfulness is right mindfulness [harmonious observation], his concentration is right concentration [harmonious collectedness]. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfillment in him by development. When he develops this Noble Eightfold Path, the four right kinds of striving also come to fulfillment in him by development; the four bases for spiritual power also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five faculties also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five powers also come to fulfillment in him by development; the seven enlightenment factors also come to fulfillment in him by development. These two things - collectedness and insight - occur in him yoked evenly together. He fully understands by direct knowledge those things that should be understood by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

14] "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates affected by clinging, that is material form aggregate affected by clinging, the feeling aggregate affected by clinging, the perception aggregate affected by clinging, the volition aggregate affected by clinging, the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge? Ignorance and craving for being. These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be developed by direct knowledge? Collectedness and insight. These are the things that should be developed by direct knowledge.

"And what should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance.

These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

15] "Bhikkhus, *when one knows and sees the nose as it actually is*, when one knows and sees odors as they actually are, when one knows and sees nose-consciousness as it actually is, when knows and sees nose-contact as it actually is, when one know and sees as it actually is [the nose-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with nose-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust for the nose, for odors, for nose-consciousness, for nose-contact, for [the nose-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with nose-contact as condition.

"When one abides un-inflamed, by lust, unfettered, un-infatuated, contemplating danger, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and one's nose-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this or that - is abandoned. One's bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

16] "The view of a person such as this is right view [harmonious perspective]. His intention is right intention [harmonious imaging], his actions are right actions [harmonious movement], his speech is right speech [harmonious communication], his livelihood is right livelihood [harmonious life style], his effort is right effort [harmonious practice], his mindfulness is right mindfulness [harmonious observation], his concentration is right concentration [harmonious collectedness]. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfillment in him by development. When he develops the Eightfold Path, the four foundations of mindfulness also comes to fulfillment in him by development; the four right kinds of striving also come to fulfillment in him by development; the four bases of spiritual power also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five faculties also come to fulfillment in him by development; The five powers also come to fulfillment in him by development; the seven factors of enlightenment also come to fulfillment in him by development. These two things - collectedness and insight - occur in him yoked evenly together. He fully understands by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

17] "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates affected by clinging, that is the material form affected by clinging, feeling affected by clinging, perception affected by clinging, volition affected by clinging, consciousness affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge? Ignorance and craving. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be developed by direct knowledge? Collectedness and insight. These are the things that should be developed by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

18] "Bhikkhus, *when one knows and sees the tongue as it actually is*, when one knows and sees flavors as they actually are, when one knows and sees tongue-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees tongue-contact as it actually is, when one knows

and sees as it actually is [the tongue-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with tongue-contact as condition then one is not inflamed by lust for the tongue, for flavors, for tongue-consciousness, for tongue-contact, for [the tongue-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with tongue-consciousness as condition.

"When one abides un-inflamed by lust, unfettered, un-infatuated, pondering on danger, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and one's tongue-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this or that - is abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

19] "The view of a person such as this is right view **[Harmonious Perspective]. His intention is right intention [Harmonious Imaging]. His speech is right speech [Harmonious Communication]. His action is right action [Harmonious Movement]. His livelihood is right livelihood [Harmonious Lifestyle]. His effort is right effort [Harmonious Practice]. His mindfulness is right mindfulness [Harmonious Observation]. His concentration is right concentration [Harmonious Collectedness]. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfillment in him by development. When he develops this Noble Eightfold Path, the four foundations of mindfulness also come to be fulfillment in him by development; the four kinds of striving also come to fulfillment in him by development; the four bases for spiritual power also come to be fulfillment in him by development; the five faculties also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five powers also come to fulfillment in him by development; the seven enlightenment factors also come to fulfillment in him by development. These two things -collected-ness and insight - occur in him yoked evenly together. He fully understands by direct knowledge those things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

20] "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates affected by clinging, the material form affected by clinging, the feeling aggregate affected by clinging, the perception aggregate affected by clinging, the volition aggregate affected by clinging, the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge? Ignorance and craving. These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

21] Bhikkhus, *when one knows and sees the body as it actually is*, when one knows and sees tangibles as they actually are, when one knows and sees body-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees body-contact as it actually is, when one knows and sees as it actually is [the body-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with body-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust for the body, for tangibles, for body-consciousness, for body-contact, for [the body-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with body-contact as condition.

"When one abides un-inflamed by lust, unfettered, un-infatuated, pondering danger, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and

one's body-craving - which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this or that - is abandoned. One's bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, and one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned, and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

22] "The view of a person such as this is right view [Harmonious Perspective]. His intention is right intention [Harmonious Imaging]. His action is right action [Harmonious Movement]. His speech is right speech [Harmonious Communication]. His livelihood is right livelihood. His effort is right effort [Harmonious Practice]. His mindfulness is right mindfulness [Harmonious Observation]. His concentration is right concentration [Harmonious Collectedness]. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfillment in him by development. When he develops the Noble Eightfold Path, the four foundations of mindfulness also come to fulfillment in him by development; the four right kinds of striving also come to fulfillment in him by development; The four bases for spiritual power also come to fulfillment in him by development; The five faculties also come to fulfillment in him by development; the five powers also come to fulfillment in him by development; the seven enlightenment factors also come to fulfillment in him by development. These two things -collectedness and insight- occur in him yoked evenly together. He fully understands by direct knowledge those things that should be understood by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

23] "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates affected by clinging, that is, the material form affected by clinging, feeling affected by clinging, perception affected by clinging, volition affected by clinging, consciousness affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge? Ignorance and craving. These are things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be developed by direct knowledge? Collectedness and insight. These are the things that should be developed by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

24] "Bhikkhus, *when one knows and sees the mind as it actually is*, when one knows and sees mind-objects as they actually are, when one knows and sees mind-consciousness as it actually is, when one knows and sees mind-contact as it actually is, when one knows and sees as it actually is [the mind-feeling] felt pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with mind-contact as condition, then one is not inflamed by lust for the mind, for mind-objects, for mind-consciousness, for mind-contact, for [the mind-feeling] felt as pleasant or painful or neither-pleasant-nor-painful that arises with mind-contact as condition.

"When one abides un-inflamed, unfettered, un-infatuated, pondering danger, then the five aggregates affected by clinging are diminished for oneself in the future; and one's mind-craving - which brings renewal of being - is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this or that - is abandoned. One's bodily and mental troubles are abandoned, one's bodily and mental torments are abandoned, one's bodily and mental fevers are abandoned and one experiences bodily and mental ease.

25] "The view of a person such as this is right view [Harmonious Perspective]. His intention is right intention [Harmonious Imaging]. His action is right action [Harmonious Movement]. His speech is right speech [Harmonious Communication]. His effort is right effort [Harmonious Practice]. His mindfulness is right mindfulness [Harmonious Observation]. His concentration is right concentration [Harmonious Collectedness]. Thus this Noble Eightfold Path comes to fulfillment in him by development. When he develops the Noble Eightfold Path, the four foundations of mindfulness also come to fulfillment by development; The four right kinds of striving also come to fulfillment by development; the four bases of spiritual power also come to fulfillment by development; the five faculties also come to fulfillment by development; the five powers also come to fulfillment by development; the seven enlightenment factors also come to fulfillment by development. These two things -collectedness and insight - occur in him yoked evenly together. He fully understands by direct knowledge those things that should be understood by direct knowledge. He abandons by direct knowledge those things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge. He develops by direct knowledge those things that should be developed by direct knowledge. He realizes by direct knowledge those things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

26] "And what things should be fully understood by direct knowledge? The answer to that is: the five aggregates affected by clinging, that is, the material form affected by clinging, feeling affected by clinging, perception affected by clinging, volition affected by clinging, consciousness affected by clinging. These are the things that should be fully understood by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be abandoned by direct knowledge? Ignorance and craving. These are the things that should be abandoned by direct knowledge.

"And what things should be developed by direct knowledge? Collectedness and Insight. These are the things that should be developed by direct knowledge.

"And what are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge? True knowledge and deliverance. These are the things that should be realized by direct knowledge.

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

Revised April 23 - 2003

**this version has removed all ditto marks so it may be read out-loud in its entirety.*

** In the Eight-fold path, why do we change the words "Right" to "Harmonious"? Everything the Buddha taught us was directed towards helping the student proceed down the path to the state of Nibana, which is the total liberation of the mind. Everything we do flows towards this point. To say "Harmonious" is more like the fluid motion of this stream. Each part of this helps the practice progress during this work. If we are in harmony with all parts of the eight-fold path, our practice will glide smoothly along. If we are in contradiction, the practice will have many difficulties along the way. WE want to be in harmony to succeed. K

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